



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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U.S. Rep. Miller, Sen. Gilbert testify on basing congressional seats on legal U.S. residents only

LANSING – U.S. Rep. Candice Miller and state Sen. Jud Gilbert today testified before a Michigan Senate committee as it approved a resolution urging Congress to adopt Miller's constitutional amendment that ensures congressional seat apportionment is based on the census count of legal citizens only.

Gilbert introduced Senate Resolution 105 in response to the impact that illegal immigrants are having on distribution of congressional seats. Seats are apportioned based on each state's population, including both legal and non-legal residents. In 2000, the high presence of non-citizens in states such as Florida, Texas and California caused Michigan and other Midwestern states to lose seats to those states with larger populations.

"This issue is a matter of fairness and is important for our political future," said Gilbert, R-Algonac. "We cannot continue losing congressional seats to areas of the country with high numbers of illegal immigrants."

Miller mentioned that while states such as Michigan and Minnesota have more than 95 percent legal U.S. citizens, in California for example, in the 31st Congressional District, only 60 percent of the "persons" counted were listed as legal citizens. The remaining 40 percent are impacting congressional representation while not being able to legally vote for those representatives. In the 2000 census, if only legal citizens had been counted, it would've impacted nine congressional seats.

"We need to protect democratic integrity and fundamental fairness through proper congressional representation, through the counting of legal American citizens only," said Miller, R-Macomb County. "Michigan has had the unfortunate experience of losing seats over the years despite its population growth. This is because we cannot keep up with the population growth of states such as California or Texas whose growth is due to illegal aliens. We are disenfranchising our legal citizens by counting these non-citizens who broke laws to get here yet are impacting our national democracy. While I believe in legal immigration, we need to protect our sacred right to vote."

SR 105 now goes to the full Senate for consideration.

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Photos from committee are available for download from the Senate Majority Photowire at www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Gilbert/Gilbert.htm